

## BRIEFLY FROM INDUSTRY

### Costain bids for tunnel contract

Richard Costain is poised to win a £13m contract to build a tunnel from Hongkong to Kowloon. The result of its tender against strong competition from Japanese firms is still unknown but the firm says it is "favourably placed". Costain's plan is to use an immersed tube tunnel with a steel shell and reinforced concrete interior which they will lower to the bed of the sea in separate units. It will have a 24ft. carriageway in each direction and will be over a mile long.

It is still a matter for speculation whether the Channel Tunnel should be bored or immersed and Costain's experience in this smaller and shallower venture might reveal some helpful information.

### A first for ICI

Imperial Chemical Industries is commissioning the first commercial plant in Britain for the manufacture of sulphur hexafluoride at Runcorn, Cheshire. The production unit will be capable of meeting the entire United Kingdom market for the material and will have a substantial margin of capacity for exports.

Sulphur hexafluoride is increasingly used as an insulating gas in heavy electrical equipment, particularly circuit breakers and current transformers. High voltages now being used for transmission of electricity are creating great demands for insulating materials.

### New cereal range

The £130m. Rank Hovis McDougall group is launching a new range of cereal seed for farmers (comprising 18 varieties of wheat, barley, and oats). It is estimated that British farmers spend about £15m. a year on cereal seed.

### Growing market

The Alfred Dunhill tobacco company is starting wider distribution of its Dunhill International brand in order to capture what it feels is a new and growing market for longer than king-size cigarettes. The International is nearly half an inch longer than normal king-size cigarettes and sells at 5s. 9d. for 20.

### Level prices

Output prices of home market sales of all manufactured products remained steady during April and May at a level much the same as in the first quarter of this year. There has been no change in output prices in the non-food sector this year, but the Board of Trade indices show that those in the food sector continue to edge up.

### Penny off food

Average household food expenditure in the fourth quarter of last year was estimated to be 35s. 9d. per person per week—only 1d. less than in the previous quarter but 10d. more than the fourth quarter of 1965. Liquid milk consumption continued to average slightly less than 5 pints per person per week. Consumption of butter, margarine, beef, and cooking fat went up.

### Textiles fall

Board of Trade returns released today show that sales by wholesale textile houses in April showed a decrease of 8 per cent on a year earlier, compared with decreases of 13 per cent and 1 per cent in March and February. The value of stocks held was 7 per cent higher at the end of April compared with the same time a year earlier.

### Book exports

Oxford University Press exported more than nine million books from Britain in the year ended April, 1967. Most of the exports were in the form of bound books, but included large quantities of printed sheets for binding elsewhere.

### Power lines

Crompton Parkinson's associated engineering company in Madras has received a £750,000 order from Indian Railways for supplying and building overhead electrical lines on 230 track miles along the Howrah-Nagpur main line.

### Modernization

Pneumatic handling plants valued at more than £1,250,000 are to be installed by Baker Perkins biscuit machinery division in the enlarged and modernized Tollcross and Liverpool factories of United Biscuits.

### As others see them

Research has shown that the great majority of people are in favour of advertising, said Dr. Timothy Joyce, British Market Research Bureau, in London, yesterday. He was speaking at a presentation organized by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.

The presentation was based on a report on research carried out for the I.P.A. into attitudes to advertising. The report, "As Others See Us", says: "While there are obviously some vocal and persistent (and perhaps influential) critics of advertising, they are a small minority of the population."

**Briefly From Industry.**

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